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With the exception of the 2,000 Hui people on Hainan Island, the Hui in Central-South China are almost indistinguishable from the average Chinese in physical appearance. Hui cohesiveness is attributable to factors other than racial and physical differences. Their language, religion, and their customs which follow religious practices and observances, make them cohesive as an ethnic group in spite of outside influences, and the fact that in the Central-South the Hui do not have large and contiguous communities.

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The Hui intermarry with the Han Chinese. However, when a Han Chinese wishes to marry a Hui woman, he must embrace Islam, whereas a Han woman who wishes to marry a Hui man, need not change her religion. Therefore, although different ancestry sets apart the Hui people from the Han Chinese, the lack of racial prejudice on the part of the Hui facilitates the assimilation of other groups into the Hui community.

In contrast to the Hui people in the Southwest, who have been antagonistic toward the Han Chinese as a result of the oppressive policies of previous Chinese governments, the Hui in the Central-South Region mingle closely with the Han Chinese in daily life. The Kuomintang government seemed to take for granted that Hui were sufficiently assimilated into Chinese communities and did not merit recognition as a separate ethnic group. In the 1930's, the Hui were treated as "believers

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11. The Hui is an ethnic designation which does not include all the believers in Islam, Many Islamic groups in China have their own ethnic names, i.e., Urgurs, Kazaks, Mongolian Moslems, Tibetan Moslems, etc.

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B. The Chuang People

Because the Chuang are better off economically than the other non-Han ethnic groups in Kwangsi and live in close association with the Han Chinese, they are not easily distinguishable from the latter.[16] Chuang people readily intermarry with the Han Chinese, and many who intermarry are not certain whether their ancestors were Chuang or Han. The Chuang's own traditional marriage system is free of the service of a middleman, and marriage is usually performed at festival times. The bride stays with her parents until the child is born, and only then is the marriage considered consummated.[17] In these customs, they are more like the Miao than the Han Chinese.

Many Chuang speak, read and write Chinese. They are not despised by the Han Chinese as much as are the other non-Han ethnic groups. However, many Chuang people who regard themselves as intellectuals and upper-class people do not like to admit that they are Chuang. Like the Pu-yi in Kweichow, the Chuang of Kwangsi as a minority group actually do not pose any minority problem for the Chinese administration.

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16. Min-tsu Cheng-t'se Wen-hsien Hui-pien [Compendium of Documents on Nationalities Policies], Peking, Jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1953, p. 52-53.

17. Wiens, op. cit., p. 53.

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the Tung landlords, too, were accused of having exploited the Yao peasants during the land reform.[20]

D. The Yao People

The Yao community is divided into two classes: the landlord and the tenant. The landlords who own land on the mountain slopes are called Shan-chu (mountain proprietors). They usually wear their hair long, and are thus called Ch'ang-mao Yao [Long-haired Yao]. The Yao peasants, who move from one mountain to another when the soil is exhausted, are called Kuo-shan Yao [Cross-mountain Yao].[21] However, the number of Yao landlords is small, and most of the Yao peasants cultivate fields owned by Han Chinese or Chuang landlords.[22] Thus, Yao intermingle with Han and Chuang people in their daily economic life.

A Kuomintang source states that Yao readily intermarry with the Han Chinese,[23] but recent

20. Min-tsu Cheng-t'se Wen-hsien Hui-pien, [as cited in footnote 16], pp. 155-56.

21. An ko-ming, Chung-kuo Shao-shu Min-tsu Feng-kuang, [Life of the Chinese Minority Nationals], Hong Kong, Hsüeh-wen shu-tien, 1955, pp. 109-10.

22. Min-tsu Cheng-t'se Wen-hsien Hui-pien, pp. 53-54.

23. Li Tsung-jen and Pei Chung-hsi, op. cit., p. 512.

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Chinese Communist sources state that Yao people have strictly forbidden their children to intermarry with the Han Chinese since the latter are hated and distrusted by the Yao people.[24] Taking account of the Kuomintang government's desire to assimilate the minorities, and the Communists' exaggeration of minority sufferings under "undemocratic government," the real attitude of the Yao toward the Han Chinese must be somewhere between the two extremes. One must not ignore the fact that the superiority of Han Chinese culture is readily recognized by the Yao people, and this recognition often leads to ready assimilation of the Yao people into Han communities, provided that the latter do not raise too high a barrier against the Yao. The hardships of the Yao people are due to the following conditions detrimental to a prosperous community:

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1. Yao peasants have to pay high rent for land under their cultivation; not infrequently, rent runs as high as 70 per cent of the total crop yield.

2. The land under their cultivation is generally low in productivity; consequently, Yao peasants are usually short of food a part of every year. To alleviate the situation, Yao peasants

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24. Min-tsu Cheng-t'se Wen-hsien Hui-pien, p. 103. (cited above).

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colleges, only about half the students appeared to favor that choice. With each successively lower economic level, the preference was more overwhelmingly for selection on the basis of kinship.[7]

F. Effect on Social and Political Role

With the collapse of the imperial system in 1912, the family was no longer fitted to serve as the social and political training ground of China. The political parties and modern schools, particularly the colleges and universities, now began to train youth for the new political world which was coming into being after 1911. No comparable institutions existed to inculcate in youth a moral and ethical code that would serve as a common guide in the new society. Attempts by the Kuomintang leaders during the period of the National Government to restore filial piety along with a revised Confucian code to the service of an increasingly authoritarian-minded state met with failure among the nation's youth.[8]

IV. THE FAMILY UNDER COMMUNISM

A. The Marriage Law

In reconstructing Chinese society, the

7. Ibid., pp. 186-89.

8. Mary C. Wright, "From Revolution to Restoration: The Transformation of Kuomintang Ideology," Far Eastern Quarterly, August, 1955, pp. 515-32.

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Communist regime has undertaken to change the nature and function of the family. The first step in this direction was the new Marriage Law promulgated in May 1950. It is one of the three legal pillars of the state. The other two -- the Labor Union Law and the Land Reform Law -- were announced at a later date but put into effect within a much shorter time and with greater immediate success.[9]

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Essentially, the outward provisions of the Marriage Law are comparable to the laws affecting marriage and the family in the civil and penal code announced by the National Government in 1930 and 1931.[10] The basic features of the new law are summed up in its first three articles, which provide for:

> (1)...The abolition of arbitrary and compulsory marriage and the putting into effect of freedom of marriage for men and women.
> (2)...The abolition of the feudal system of marriage...based on the superiority of man over woman, and the putting into effect...of monogamy, and equal rights for both sexes.

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9. See comment by the American editors of Current Background, Hong Kong, American Consulate, 236, pp. 1-3; hereafter cited as C.B. Unless editorial comment is indicated, as here, citations from Current Background refer to literal translations of material in Communist magazines and newspapers, and should be evaluated accordingly.

10. See comment of American editors of C.B., 136, p. 3.

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(3)...The abolition of the feudal system of marriage, which neglects the interests of the children, and the putting into effect of the New Democratic system of marriage, which protects the lawful interests of women and children.[11]

In propagandizing and implementing the Marriage Law, the regime struck hard against the old authoritarianism of the family head, child marriages, mistreatment of women and discrimination against them as inferior to men, and the mistreatment of children by parents. Wives, especially wives of arranged marriages, were encouraged to seek divorce from intolerant, unrepentent husbands. However, if husbands could be made to adopt the new attitude toward women, partners of arranged marriages were urged to remain united.

To help traditionally-minded families attain the new Communist-established goal of "democracy" and "harmony," Family "struggle" meetings were arranged under cadre supervision. Each member was pressed to confess his own past sins and suffering and to help other family members to remember theirs. The particular transgressions sought out for exposure,

11. "Document 7," C.B., 236, pp. 22-29.

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property of their parents, but belong first of all to the state and to the people, and...the interests of the people should be the highest criterion governing our actions toward our parents."[13] 668 596

An editorial in the People's Daily in March 1955 notes that remnant feudal ideologies still obstructed "the participation of women in Socialist construction and various political activities." The editorial then goes on to state that it is in order to promote the political and production zeal of women that their rights must be promoted and protected and the Marriage Law implemented.[14] Various comments on the Marriage Law inspired by the regime stress Lenin's dictum that sex relationships and family problems are not individual or small affairs but matters of great social, economic, and political significance.[15] 668 562

B. Implementation of the Marriage Law

As the Nationalist Government had made no attempt to put into effect the marriage and family provisions of its 1930-31 codes among the rural population, the spirit and provisions of the Marriage Law were new and alien to the great 671 582

13. S.C.M.P., 973, p. 31.
14. Ibid., 106, p. 15.
15. See, for instance, C.B., 275, p. 4; and S.C.M.P., 1048, pp. 30-31.

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majority of the Chinese people. They were still bound to the traditional family and had not encountered the economic experience and education which had pushed the family in Western-influenced cities toward new types of social organization from the beginning of the twentieth century. Moreover, the new law offered no immediate or apparent economic benefits as had the Land Reform Law. 671 582

The result was apathy, when not open resistance, toward the reorientation of marriage and family practices among the farming population. These attitudes were as typical of most of the village cadres as of the rural people generally.[16] However, Liu Ching-fan's criticism in 1953 of the use of force by village cadres to achieve acceptance of the new Marriage Law's provisions indicates that up to that time violence accompanied this measure as it had other measures in Communist China.[17]

The regime became aware only slowly of the failure of the Marriage Law to take automatic effect. A preliminary investigation gave such cause for concern that a thorough investigation was made at the end of 1952.[18] The results impelled the Communists to launch a drive for the thorough implementation of the Marriage Law and intensive indoctrination of the people in its

16. See comment of American editors of C.B., 136, pp. 3-4

17. C.B., 273, p. 4.

18. See comment of American editors of C.B., 136, pp. 3-4.

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principles. The movement was restricted to Han Chinese areas where land reform had been completed.[19] 671 582

Summing up the result of the campaign before the Government Administrative Council on November 11, 1953, Liu Ching-fan reported satisfactory indoctrination of 80 to 90 per cent of the adults in 15 per cent of the nation's hsien and municipalities where land reform had been completed and, to a somewhat lesser degree, 60 to 70 per cent of the people in 60 per cent of similar local areas. Almost no progress was indicated in the remaining 25 per cent of the localities.[20] Assuming the population in these areas to be roughly equal, these figures would mean that on an over-all basis even partial success was claimed for only 48 to 55.5 per cent of the population subjected to the indoctrination process.

C. The Communists' Vague Picture of Success

Unfortunately, we cannot judge how successful the regime has been in implementing the Marriage Law nationally or regionally. Communist evaluations are too generalized to reveal a

19. C.B., 273, p. 1.
20. Ibid., p. 3.

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definite picture, and statistics released by the regime are sketchy and, when available, rarely provide a basis for significant comparison. For instance, in the spring of 1955 the Ministry of Internal Affairs reported on the prevalence of free marriages during the first quarter of 1954, stating that of the 402,025 applications for marriage registration in 562 hsien and municipalities of 15 provinces, only 1.07 per cent were denied because the contemplated marriages had been forced or arranged without the willing consent of the couples concerned.[21] No figures were given on the remaining, roughly three-quarters of the country's hsien and municipalities, nor was any indication given to show whether the figures cited were typical of the whole country, the only figures available, or figures selected for purposes of propaganda. If the figures can be given credence, they indicate a remarkable advance over the situation existing two years earlier. After an investigation of Marriage Law implementation in 1952, a woman minister of justice, Shih Liang, reported that in only three of the country's 2,086 counties were families reformed up to perfect Communist standards, and that in the East and Central-South regions freely contracted marriages and other reforms had gained no acceptance with the people.[22]

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21. S.C.M.P., 1002, p. 30.
22. China New Analysis, Hong Kong, No. 5, p. 3.

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A further study of figures issued by Communist sources indicates that the regime did not have exact knowledge of the situation in many areas. To cite one example, an announcement of the results of the 1952 investigation of Marriage Law implementation included "incomplete statistics" on deaths attributed to the existence of problems and mistreatment connected with the "feudal family" system. According to these figures, 4,105 women were killed or driven to suicide in the East China Region between January and August, 1952; and 356 women and 161 young men suffered the same fate in the Northwest Region during the first half of 1952. In lieu of figures for the Central-South Region, the report mentioned 606 young men and women met violent deaths as a result of marriage disputes in 39 hsien (out of a total of 86)in Hunan.[23]

It seems reasonable to assume that the figures are incomplete and the categories not comparable because the Communists had no more accurate material to offer. If the incidence of violence in connection with marital and family disputes is truly reflected in these figures, their extension into yearly rates shows these deaths occurred at the rate of less than two per hundred-thousand population in the Northwest Region, less than four per hundred-thousand in the East China Region, and less than nine per

23. C.B., 236, p. 5.